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ACTION WHA-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	SRPP-00	EB-00	UTED-00	VC-00
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	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
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R 282029Z JUN 02
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
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INFO USCINCSO MIAMI FL
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USAID FOR LAC - A. FRANCO
USAID FOR DCHA - L. ROGERS
USAID FOR DCHA/OTI - D. TAYLOR
NSC FOR AMBASSADOR MAISTO

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PHUM, SOCI, KDEM, VE
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVE
ASSISTANCE

1. ACTION REQUEST. EMBASSY REQUESTS FUNDING AND
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PROGRAMMATIC ASSISTANCE FROM USAID'S BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY,
CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO:

A. PRESERVE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES, AND

B. PROMOTE DIALOGUE AMONG ALL VENEZUELAN TO FOSTER A
CONSENSUS BY WHICH TO GOVERN VENEZUELA DEMOCRATICALLY,
CONSTITUTIONALLY, AND PEACEFULLY. END ACTION REQUEST

2. THE APRIL 11-14 EVENTS OF INDICATE THAT VENEZUELA'S
DEMOCRACY REMAINS AT RISK, THE RESULT OF A STEADY WEAKENING
OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND DECREASING PUBLIC FAITH
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PRESS.
SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY REMAINS THE UNITED STATES' TOP FOREIGN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
DATE/CASE ID: 23 JUN 2006 200503262

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POLICY PRIORITY IN THE HEMISPHERE AND IN VENEZUELA. IN HIS RECENT SPEECH TO THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS, SECRETARY POWELL SAID "PEOPLE ARE LOSING FAITH IN THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS AND SYSTEMS" AROUND THE HEMISPHERE. NOWHERE IS THAT MORE TRUE THAN IN VENEZUELA.

3. THE UNITED STATES HAS AN ABIDING INTEREST TO ENSURE THAT VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY, WHICH TOOK ROOT FOLLOWING THE 1958 OVERTHROW OF THE PEREZ JIMENEZ DICTATORSHIP, ENDURES AND STRENGTHENS. FOR DEMOCRACY TO REMAIN VIABLE, SUPPORT IS NEEDED FOR THE INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR CHECKS AND BALANCES, AND ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE FREE EXPRESSION OF IDEAS, INCLUDING, AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS, BY THE MEDIA, CIVIL SOCIETY, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

4. SUPPORT IS ALSO NEEDED TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE BETWEEN
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GROUPS THAT HAVE LITTLE TRUST IN EACH OTHER. SPACE FOR POLITICAL DIALOGUE IS AT A PREMIUM AND SUPPORT FOR INITIATIVES TO MOVE DIALOGUE FORWARD IN A PRODUCTIVE AND EFFECTIVE FASHION ARE ESSENTIAL TO REDUCE THE INCREASING SOCIETAL TENSIONS AND ADVANCE AN AGENDA FOR GOVERNABILITY.

5. THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN VENEZUELA IS CRITICAL AND CANNOT BE SUSTAINED FOR LONG. VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY IS AT RISK BOTH FROM THE AUTHORITARIAN TENDENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS FROM ANTI-DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS IN THE OPPOSITION. THE LARGE MASSES OF THE POOR ARE ANGRY OVER THE NEGLECT THEY HAVE LONG SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE POLITICAL CLASS AND BELIEVE THIS NEGLECT IS THE CAUSE OF THEIR POVERTY. THE CHAVEZ GOVERNMENT HAS FANNED THE EMBERS OF SOCIAL RESENTMENT, WHICH HAS LONG EXISTED HERE, UNTIL THEY RISK TO ERUPT INTO FULL-BLOWN CLASS CONFLICT.

6. WE RECOGNIZE THAT OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE EVENTS IN VENEZUELA IS LIMITED, NEVERTHELESS, THE USG SHOULD ATTEMPT TO ENCOURAGE THE OPPOSING SIDES TO TALK TO EACH OTHER. BY INVOLVING PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE POLITICAL FENCE IN PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON THESE GOALS OR PROBLEMS, WE CAN HELP TO STIMULATE DIALOGUE AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

7. PERHAPS THE BEST MEANS WE HAVE FOR DOING THIS IS THROUGH PROGRAMS FUNDED BY USAID AND THE MISSION'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROGRAMS MANAGED BY PAS. AID/OTI'S PROGRAMS WILL NEED TO BE REFOCUSED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF POST-APRIL 11 VENEZUELA. OTHER AGENCIES OF THE MISSION ALSO HAVE

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PROGRAMS THAT COULD BE COORDINATED TO SERVE THIS SAME
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PURPOSE.

8. THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF SOME COMMON GOALS THAT
SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL:

A. STRENGTHEN VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY THROUGH DEVELOPMENT AND
INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF POLITICAL PARTIES (PRO-
GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION).

B. PROMOTE THE INDEPENDENCE, IMPARTIALITY AND EFFICIENCY
OF THE JUDICIARY.

C. DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN A FREE, INDEPENDENT LABOR
MOVEMENT.

D. CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING FOR POLITICAL ACTORS TO
PROMOTE DIALOGUE, AVOID VIOLENCE.

E. DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA AND
THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN A DEMOCRATIC
SOCIETY.

9. IN ADDITION TO INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED IN THE OI

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USAID FOR LAC - A. FRANCO
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PHUM, SOCI, KDEM, VE

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVE
ASSISTANCE

REPORT, OTHERS THAT COULD HELP PROMOTE DIALOGUE ON THE
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ISSUES MENTIONED ABOVE ARE:

- A. EDUCATION REFORM: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES WORKING ON EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, STATE GOVERNMENTS AND MUNICIPALITIES (OFFICES OF EDUCATION), FUNDACION MUSEO DEL NINO, UNIVERSITIES, AND NGO SUCH AS ASAMBLEA DE EDUCACION, MOVIMIENTO NULIDAD 1.011, CEDICE, MIRADOR DEMOCRATICO, RED DE APOYO, CECODAP, ASOCIACION DE ESCUELAS PRIVADAS, AND FORO EDUCATIVO DE IESA
- B. REDUCING POVERTY AND PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT: FORO EDUCATIVO DE IESA, FUNDACION CIUDAD DE LA ESPERANZA, INAMUJER (NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN), CESAP, MINISTRY OF THE FAMILY, FUNDACION DEL NIO, CECODAP, UNIVERSITIES, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICES FOR DEVELOPMENT. PERHAPS CIPE COULD ALSO PLAY A ROLE HERE.
- C. PROMOTING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY: CIVITAS VENEZUELA, CEDICE, ESCUELA DE VECINOS DE VENEZUELA, SINERGIA, MIRADOR DEMOCRATICO, RED DE VEEDORES, ASAMBLEA DE CIUDADANOS, CONSORCIO JUSTICIA, VENEZUELA COMPETITIVA, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN EDUCATION, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IS A CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE), UNIVERSITIES AND MEDIA (TO WORK IN CIVIC JOURNALISM), BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.
- D. COMBATING CORRUPTION: RED DE VEEDORES, UNIVERSITIES, FUNDACION MOMENTO DE LA GENTE, MIRADOR DEMOCRATICO, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (RELEVANT COMMITTEES), FISCALIA, INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DE LA FISCALIA, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIE

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AND SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES.

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- E. STRENGTHENING POLITICAL PARTIES: ALL POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR RELATED FOUNDATIONS, UNIVERSITIES, NGOS SUCH AS MOMENTO DE LA GENTE, MIRADOR DEMOCRATICO, ESCUELA DE VECINO DE VENEZUELA, CONSORCIO JUSTICIA, STATE GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS (I.E. ESCUELA DE GOBIERNO DE ZULIA), IZEPES. IRI AND NDI CA ALSO HELP WITH THIS.
- F. JUDICIAL REFORM AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, FISCALIA, TRIBUNAL SUPREMO DE JUSTICIA (TSJ), NGOS WORKING WITH JUSTICES OF THE PEACE SUCH AS CONSTITUCION ACTIVA AND CONSORCIO JUSTICIA, HUMAN RIGHTS NGOS SUCH AS ACCSI, COFAVIC, ETC.
- G. FREE AND ORGANIZED LABOR: CTV, BOLIVARIAN WORKERS FEDERATION, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MINISTRY OF LABOR, SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES, RED DE VEEDORES, CONFLICT RESOLUTION EXPERTS IN NGOS. ACILS WOULD BE AN OBVIOUS PLAYER IN THIS.
- H. CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR POLITICAL ACTORS: POLITICAL PARTIES, NGOS SUCH AS MIRADOR DEMOCRATICO, MOMENTO DE LA GENTE, CEDICE.
- I. GOVERNMENT-MEDIA RELATIONS AND ROLE OF MEDIA IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY: UNIVERSITIES, MEDIA INSTITUTIONS, BLOQU DE PRENSA, NATIONAL COLLEGE OF JOURNALISTS, CHAMBER OF RADI AND TELEVISION BROADCASTERS, NGOS SUCH AS MOMENTO DE LA GENTE, CEDICE.

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TO ASSURE OUR CREDIBILITY, WE MUST BE CAREFUL THAT
PARTICIPATION IN EACH PROGRAM IS BALANCED AND OPEN TO BOTH
PRO AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

10. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMS
THAT COULD BE CONDUCTED TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE ON THE COMMON
GOALS MENTIONED ABOVE:

-- OFF SITES IN THE US FOR GROUPS OF YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS
FROM 14 MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES TO FOCUS ON THEMES SUCH AS
NEGOTIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. THESE COULD BE
ORGANIZED BY IRI AND NDI. THEY COULD BE FUNDED BY OTI, IF
NECESSARY.

-- TRIPS FOR GROUPS OF POLITICAL LEADERS TO COUNTRIES WHERE
DIALOGUE/CONFLICT RESOLUTION HAS OCCURRED TO STUDY SUCCESSES
AND FAILURES. OTI COULD FUND THESE TRIPS.

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-- BRINGING INDIVIDUALS FROM COUNTERED WHERE DIALOGUE AND
CONFLICT RESOLUTION HAS OCCURRED TO VENEZUELA TO SPEAK AT
CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS.

-- WORKSHOPS IN ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FOR JUSTICES

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E.O. 12958: N/A
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ASSISTANCE

OF THE PEACE TO ORGANIZED BY TSJ AND NGOS SUCH AS CONSORCIO
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JUSTICIA. PAS COULD BRING SPEAKERS. OTI COULD FUND OTHER
COSTS. FOLLOW-ON TRIPS FOR SELECTED JUSTICES OF THE PEACE TO
LEARN HOW THEIR US COUNTERPARTS AND OTHER GRASSROOTS
INSTITUTIONS WORK IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION. PAS COULD FUND
SOME THROUGH VOLUNTARY VISITOR PROGRAM. OTI COULD ALSO HELP
WITH FUNDS.

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-- WORKSHOP ON GOVERNMENT-MEDIA RELATIONS FOR MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ORGANIZED BY UNIVERSITIES, NGOS OR JOURNALIST ORGANIZATIONS. PAS COULD BRING SPEAKERS. FOLLOW-ON TRIPS TO LEARN HOW THIS WORKS IN THE US. TRIPS COULD BE FUNDED BY PAS AND/OR OTI.

-- ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE TRAINING IN HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR COURTS THROUGH WORKSHOPS AND FOLLOW-ON TRIPS FOR ADMINISTRATORS.

-- CONTINUED TRAINING IN ORAL TRIAL PROCEDURES FOR PROSECUTORS, PUBLIC DEFENDERS AND JUDGES. PAS, NAS AND OTI COULD CONTRIBUTE TO FUNDING WORKSHOPS AND TRIPS TO US AND PUERTO RICO.

-- PAYING THROUGH THE OAS SOME OR ALL OF THE EXPENSES OF ACTIVE MEDIATION EFFORTS IN VENEZUELA.

VENEZUELA IS AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN ITS HISTORY IN WHICH DEMOCRACY IS AT RISK. SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY REMAINS ONE OF OUR PRINCIPAL FOREIGN POLICY GOALS IN VENEZUELA AND THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. TARGETED, FLEXIBLE PROGRAMS SUCH AS THOSE OUTLINED HERE COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THEREFORE, THE AMBASSADOR REQUESTS ASSISTANCE

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FROM USAID'S BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HELP VENEZUELA AVOID CONFLICT BY FINDING A PATH TO PEACE THROUGH NEGOTIATION AND DIALOGUE.

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